

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-12 (cancelled)

Claim 13 (currently amended): A structure in an integrated circuit, the structure comprising:

a last metal level; and
a passivation level comprising a low-k dielectric substantially filling a space extending between a sidewall of a metal line and a sidewall of another metal line in the last metal level[[.]], the low-k dielectric being over the metal line and the another metal line, the passivation level further comprising a layer of dielectric over the low-k dielectric.

Claim 14 (cancelled)

Claim 15 (currently amended): The structure of claim 13 wherein the passivation level further comprises ~~a layer of dielectric over the low-k dielectric and a topside material over the layer of dielectric.~~

Claim 16 (original): The structure of claim 13 wherein the low-k dielectric has a dielectric constant less than about 3.9.

Claim 17 (currently amended): The structure of claim 13 wherein the metal line has a thickness between about 8000 Angstroms and about 15000 Angstroms.

Claim 18 (currently amended): A structure in an integrated circuit, the structure comprising:

means for carrying a signal in a last metal level; ~~and~~
means for reducing propagation delay of the signal, the means for reducing propagation delay of the signal comprising a low-k dielectric substantially filling a space between a sidewall of a metal line and a sidewall of an adjacent metal line in the last metal level[[.]], the low-k dielectric being over the metal line and the adjacent metal line; and
means for covering the low-k dielectric.

Claim 19 (original): The structure of claim 18 wherein the means for carrying the signal comprises a metal line having a thickness between about 8000 Angstroms and about 15000 Angstroms.

Claim 20 (cancelled)

Claim 21 (currently amended): The structure of claim 18 wherein the means for covering the low-k dielectric comprises ~~further comprising~~ a layer of dielectric over the low-k dielectric and a topside material over the layer of dielectric.

Claim 22 (previously presented): The structure of claim 18 wherein the low-k dielectric has a dielectric constant less than about 3.9.

Claim 23 (currently amended): A structure in an integrated circuit, the structure comprising:

a plurality of metal lines over a first dielectric layer, the metal lines being in a last metal level; and

a low-k dielectric between metal lines in the plurality of metal lines, the low-k dielectric substantially filling a space extending more than about 50% of a distance between a sidewall of a metal line and a sidewall of an adjacent metal line in the plurality of metal lines[.], the low-k dielectric being over the plurality of metal lines; and
a dielectric layer over the low-k dielectric.

Claim 24 (previously presented): The structure of claim 23 wherein the low-k dielectric has a dielectric constant less than about 3.9.

Claim 25 (previously presented): The structure of claim 23 wherein the low-k dielectric is directly on the first dielectric layer.

Claim 26 (currently amended): The structure of claim 23 further comprising a ~~second dielectric layer over the low-k dielectric and a topside material over the second dielectric layer.~~